

Substance Abuse Treatment in Pima County

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Project Background

In October 1987, the Pima County Sheriff's Department was awarded a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), a division of the U.S. Department of Justice. The purpose of the eighteen-month, **\$300,000** grant was to set up a national demonstration program showing how drug abusers could be treated successfully in a jail setting.

The Amity/Pima County Jail Project was the first of three model drug treatment programs in jails developed under grants from the BJA. The other demonstration sites are in Tampa, Florida (Hillsborough County) and Chicago, Illinois (Cook County). The primary purpose of these projects is to offer working, efficient treatment models that other jails can replicate, in whole or in part.

The American Jail Association (AJA), under its own grant from

BJA, coordinates and monitor all three demonstration projects. The AJA conducts frequent information-sharing sessions and arranges visits at each site for representatives of jails around the country.

Treatment under Direct Supervision

The Pima County Adult Detention Center was built and operated as a direct supervision facility long before the Amity/Pima County Jail Project was envisioned. The unique features of direct supervision lend themselves particularly well to the needs of a drug program.

In short, the philosophy of direct supervision is to treat inmates as mature adults and to make them responsible for their own behavior. An inmate who knows that any violation of the rules will result in certain punishment -i.e., confinement to his cell-is less likely to act irresponsibly.

The Pima County Sheriff's Department was one of the first in the country to commit itself to the principle of direct supervision. The techniques of direct supervision, coupled with a well-trained staff,

proved to be successful in modifying inmates' behavior. It seemed only natural, then, to use similar principles to encourage permanent changes in the behavior of drug offenders.

The goals of direct supervision and of a drug treatment program are basically the same: to promote positive behavior by maintaining a positive environment. In this sense, the Amity/Pima County Jail Project is really an extension of a successful program that was already in place.

Project Coordination

In keeping with the philosophy of partnership between the Pima County Sheriff's Department and Amity, Inc., it was decided that leadership of the project should be shared between two coordinators-one with a background in

The Pima County program was set up under a BJA grant as a national demonstration project.

corrections, the other with a background in substance abuse treatment. These two Jail Program Coordinators oversee every aspect of the Pima County program-from

training staff and screening inmates to planning educational workshops. In addition, the program coordinators are responsible for maintaining good relations between correctional and treatment personnel.

The Need for Cross-Training

In order for the program to function effectively, it was important that the corrections officers supervising the pod that housed the project become familiar with treatment techniques used to help drug abusers. Similarly, it was essential that Amity counselors working in the pod be acquainted with basic jail security and emergency procedures.

The policy of cross-training is considered vital to the success of the Pima County project, and it has continued to be a requirement for new staff members assigned to the pod. The spirit of cooperation between the Sheriff's Department and Amity employees has remained strong, although there have been several personnel changes since the start of the project.

Selecting Inmate Participants

Every prospective participant is interviewed by the program coordinators, and sometimes by other members of the treatment team as well. About thirty of these interviews are conducted each week. During the interview, the inmate is informed about what will be

expected of him or her in the program, and is asked to explain why he or she wants to take part in it.

Preference is given to those inmates who express serious interest in overcoming their drug dependence, and to those whose youth or inexperience makes immediate treatment especially important.

Learning from the Pima County Experience

The design of the Amity/Pima County project is most easily adapted to a jail that has a direct supervision facility, in an area served by a community substance abuse treatment agency such as Amity. Many communities, however, lack one or both of these prerequisites.

Nevertheless, aspects of the program can be adapted to almost any jail. Any of the following components, used by itself or in combination with others, can improve the effectiveness of drug treatment in a correctional setting.

- **Cross-training.** Treatment staff should receive training from corrections personnel, and vice versa. Differences in approach should be discussed and resolved.
- **Recovered role models.** Former drug abusers should be employed as counselors, in order to provide positive role models for inmates and add credibility to the program.

- **Encounter or support groups.**

Addicts should be encouraged to express their feelings, talk out their differences, and aid each other's efforts to recover.

- **Videotape.** Inmates should be videotaped at different stages of treatment and should be encouraged to change their behavior based on what they observe on tape.

- **Education.** Classes, workshops, seminars, newsletters, educational films, and other sources of drug-related information should be offered to inmates.

- **Therapeutic communities.** If possible, addicts should be able to live and work together so that they may offer each other support and guidance.

- **Accountability.** Inmates should be held responsible for their social behavior, for the cleanliness of their living areas, and for any violations of stated rules.

- **Linkage.** Relationships should be established with community agencies, both public and private, to provide for addicts' continued treatment and socialization upon release.

The lessons of Pima County can also be applied to other kinds of programs-artistic, educational, or religious, for example-that have nothing to do with drug abuse. A close, cooperative relationship between security and program staff

can yield benefits throughout the institution.

Ongoing Project Activities

The eighteen-month BJA grant that originally supported the project expired in April 1989. At that point an additional \$350,000 was awarded. The additional funding provides for the continuation of the program as well as the addition of an aftercare program. The continuation also allows for the accumulation of data for research purposes to measure the effectiveness of this program.

Under the terms of the BJA grant, the Amity/Pima County Jail Project is intended to be a model for treatment programs in other jurisdictions. Members of the program staff are willing and able to help other corrections departments around the country implement similar projects.

Officials who are interested in designing a similar program are encouraged to contact either Bob May, Project Manager, at the American Jail Association, 1000 Day Road, Suite 100, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740, (301) 790-3930, or Captain Frank R. Hecht, Pima County Sheriff's Department, P.O. Box 910, Tucson, Arizona, 85702, (602) 740-2836. ■

Recommended Reading

First/Second Line Jail Supervisor's Training Manual. **Alexandria, Virginia:** **National Sheriffs' Association,** **1989.**

The first line supervisor, who serves in a jail as a bridge between line and staff officers, is often caught in a delicate position between these groups. According to the first chapter of this manual, however, "The key ingredient in developing harmonious relations among the various interest groups in the jail is the professional development of the first line supervisor."

This 334-page manual is the central tool in a training program for the professional development of first line supervisors in jails. The manual can be used as a tool for independent study or, along with an instructor's manual and overheads

soon to be developed, as part of a regular course for first line supervisors,

The manual addresses a range of topics related to the duties of first line supervisors, including legal issues, employee supervision and evaluation, budgeting, labor relations, records management, security, training, and issues related to inmates. Each chapter includes hypothetical case studies addressing situations that are likely to be encountered, as well as a summary of the major points made in the chapter.

Material for the manual was contributed by a number of professionals in the field of jail operations. The manual was developed by the National Sheriffs' Association through a grant from the National Institute of Corrections.

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Availability: Single copies of this title may be obtained by calling the NIC Information Center at (303) 939-8877, or by sending your request to the NIC Information Center, 1790 30th Street, Suite 130, Boulder, Colorado 80301.